

REMARKS

In the subject Office Action, claims 1-7, 10, 11, 23 and 25-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 1,902,394 to Carteret.

In response, independent claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of dependent claim 2, and claim 2 has been cancelled. Amended independent claim 1 recites a sub-assembly for a vehicle suspension system including a leaf spring, a pair of mountings located at fore and aft ends of the leaf spring and complementary means associated with the leaf springs and with at least one of the fore and aft mountings that permit adjustment of the free assembly length of the spring, with the complimentary means including an oversize aperture in the leaf spring, through which aperture spring securing means of the mounting extends. Applicant submits that such an arrangement is not disclosed by Carteret.

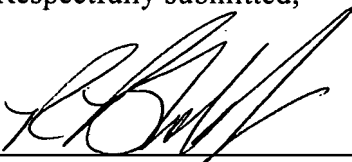
As illustrated in Figs. 1 and 3 of Carteret, the fore and aft end mountings of the springs of Carteret are mounted to links j^1 and j^2 by eyes, not an oversize aperture through which spring securing means extend and that permit adjustment of the free assembly length of the spring. The embodiment of Fig. 4 of Carteret also fails to disclose this feature recited by amended independent claim 1. As a result, Carteret does not provide for the same adjustments to the free assembly lengths of the leaves of each spring, which can be made during assembly of the suspension to an associated vehicle, as the sub-assembly of amended claim 1, as described in paragraph [0067] of the present application.

Applicant therefore respectfully submits that amended independent claim 1 is patentable over Carteret. As a result, Applicant also respectfully submits that the claims dependent on amended claim 1 are patentable.

Applicant appreciates the indication that claims 13-22 and 24 are allowed and that claims 8 and 9 are objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, claim 8 has been rewritten in independent form by the present amendment. In addition, claim 23 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 24, and claim 24 has been cancelled. Applicant therefore respectfully submits that claims 8 and 24 are now also patentable, as are the claims which are dependent thereon.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that the application is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of the case, it is requested that the undersigned attorney be telephoned for that purpose.

Respectfully submitted,



R. Blake Johnston, Reg. No. 41,097

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DLA PIPER US LLP
203 N. LaSalle St., Suite 1900
Chicago, Illinois 60601
Ph: 312-368-8921
Fax: 312-630-6310